United Nations S/PV.4766 (Resumption 1)

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4766th meeting

Friday, 30 May 2003, 3.15 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Chungong Ayafor
	Chile	Mr. Valdés
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security

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03-37710 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.25 p.m.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): Let me begin by saying that we fully endorse the statement that will be made later by the presidency of the European Union on behalf of all its member States.

I would like to thank you and your delegation, Mr. President, for having convened this very important meeting.

Germany welcomes the fact that the Council gives a great deal of attention to the situation in Africa. That is where most conflicts are taking place, with the greatest human suffering. It is therefore appropriate to have two upcoming Security Council missions focus on the major African issues. We expect fresh impetus for future Council action.

The work of regional organizations in Africa is highly commendable, and it shows a growing sense of responsibility. I would like to pay tribute in particular to current efforts by the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the prevention and settlement of conflicts. By promoting a political settlement and contributing to peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, individual countries such as South Africa show strong leadership in promoting stability in a conflict situation. The same is true for those countries providing troops for the African mission in Burundi and for other regional initiatives.

We particularly welcome the decision taken by the Security Council this morning to authorize a peacekeeping mission to Bunia, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, thereby bringing relief and security to the suffering population. We commend France for having taken the lead in this mission.

The primary responsibility for creating the necessary conditions to prevent crises and to take measures to solve conflicts lies with the affected countries themselves. The international community can help, but its support can be effective only if the parties themselves decide to bring about a solution to the conflict that is conducive to durable peace. That brings into focus the importance of a regional approach to crisis situations in Africa — in particular in West Africa and the Great Lakes region, where many problems are interlinked and instability seems to be spreading. Let me highlight just three of these interlinked problems: first, the plundering of natural resources; secondly, the flow of weapons; and, thirdly, the refugee problem.

On the first point, the plundering of natural resources, we feel that this often fuels and prolongs conflicts. We see the worst example of that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An intensive dialogue with Governments and political leaders is necessary. Where dialogue fails, international pressure on Governments, companies and individuals must be the next step. A good example of the dialogue we envisage is the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their reports have had positive results, because Governments have taken action and companies have been encouraged to review their policies.

The second point, the continuous flow of weapons and other military materiel to belligerents, is another important issue. In our view, neighbouring States must cooperate in the effort, and muster the political will, to stop the flow of arms to belligerents. If failure to do so is due to a lack of capabilities, those have to be strengthened. In addition, better implementation of Security Council resolutions is necessary. For example, effective implementation of existing sanctions regimes for Liberia and Somalia could give considerable support to regional mediation efforts between the parties to those conflicts. In both cases panels of experts established by the Security Council are working very effectively to monitor and improve the implementation of those sanctions regimes. They are supplying the Council with important recommendations. It is a matter of political will among Council members to then use those findings effectively.

Further measures to control the illicit flow of small arms have to be taken. I fully agree with Ambassador Aguilar Zinser, who said this morning that small arms and small weapons are the real weapons of mass destruction: they kill more people than any other weapon. This implies that we must not only see to it that we curtail the purchase of such weapons on the demand side, but also that we establish controls on the supply side. The United Nations weapons register is an important tool in this regard.

Finally, the third example of the regional dimension of a prevailing problem is the large numbers of refugees, displaced persons and other vulnerable groups. As witnessed in the conflicts in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, refugees are often driven back and forth between the changing front lines of a conflict. The fragile stability achieved in Sierra Leone is tested by the influx of new refugees from neighbouring countries. We therefore believe the Security Council should, on the basis of the results of its mission, seriously consider a comprehensive approach to stabilize this region.

With regard to strengthening African capabilities in the fields of the prevention, management and solution of armed conflict, Germany is fully committed to the strategic goal expressed in the G-8 Africa Action Plan to enhance technical and financial assistance. Its goal is that by 2010 African countries and regional and subregional organizations will be able to engage even more effectively to prevent and resolve violent conflict on the continent and to undertake peace support operations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The instruments are mostly there, but we must generate the political will to use them effectively.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this wrap-up meeting — a meeting that is also a preparation for the two missions that are to leave for Africa in the coming days. I would also like to thank Ibrahim Gambari for his statement this morning. I believe that a number of his recommendations should be considered carefully by the Council.

As a country associated with the European Union, Bulgaria associates itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to make a few brief comments in my national capacity.

Bulgaria considers it natural that a great deal of the Security Council's effort and time, and much of its agenda, should be devoted to Africa, since the conflicts on that continent have an unfortunate tendency to be intense, long-running and cyclical in nature. They take a heavy toll in terms of the number of victims and the human suffering they cause. From that perspective, it is important for the Security Council and the United Nations system to continue not just to have a presence on the African continent, but to be very active there. The missions that the Council has been undertaking for some years now on that continent are a manifestation of the sustained attention the United Nations gives to Africa.

This morning the two leaders of the missions — Jean-Marc de La Sablière and Jeremy Greenstock — clearly set out the objectives of those missions. I have little to add, but I would like simply to refer to a comment by Ambassador Pleuger relating to the problem of small arms. That is certainly a major problem in Africa, and it is linked to the issue of the illegal exploitation of natural resources, since the exploitation of such resources is the main source of funding for the arms trade.

I agree with his analysis, but I would like to draw the attention of Council members to one of the links in the chain of the arms trade — international arms dealers. This is a relatively small group of individuals who are well known to the legal authorities and the police in many countries throughout the world. Those who work on sanctions committees are well aware that the same names crop up again and again. We must begin to deal with that problem once and for all, as it is of crucial importance for the African continent, as well as other parts of the world. It also has a negative impact on the countries where such arms brokers operate, as they are a source of corruption with respect to administrations of many arms-producing countries that serve as intermediaries in this traffic. I wanted to make that point during this debate, because it seemed that, in the context of the fight against organized crime — and this is clearly one aspect of that fight — we could not remain silent on the harmful role of such arms brokers.

Another point to which I would like to refer is the partnership of the Security Council with African regional and subregional organizations, which I think we all agree is very important. Judging from my own personal experience, very often such organizations need enhanced capacity — institutional, financial and personnel capacity — in reacting to crisis situations.

With regard to the situation in the Great Lakes region, I believe that it is important to ensure that regional and subregional cooperation not be confined merely to the drawing up of successive peace plans but go beyond that. In this context, the experience of certain continents — and I, of course, can speak of Europe — could be considered by our African friends.

The situation with regard to the reciprocal recognition of borders, for example, is somewhat similar to that in Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, when the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was involved. That might not provide an exact model, but it could prove useful to African countries.

Before concluding, I would like to make one point very forcefully. Our experience during the Security Council missions has shown us the importance on the ground of the work of non-governmental organizations. Those organizations do outstanding work, and their partnership with the United Nations is extremely useful and should be encouraged.

I must say that our discussions on Africa would not make much headway if we did not take account of the global context in which African conflicts take place. Africans often come up against globalization in the form of the internationalization of arms trafficking, which, in its turn, benefits from a very effective international banking system. I believe that to some extent, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations represent the human face of globalization. That is why the role of the United Nations in Africa is irreplaceable.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Haraguchi (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation for your leadership, Sir, in convening this meeting to address the situations in West and Central Africa, which have become of grave concern to the international community. It is timely, in our view, for the Security Council to dispatch missions to those regions to gain a precise understanding of the situations and the gravity of the crises and to directly address the question of what effective measures can be taken by the United Nations.

Conflict resolution in Africa requires an enhanced and comprehensive approach to ensure and coordinate cooperation by various actors within the international community. We hope that, upon returning from the missions, the members of the Council will share with all of us the first-hand knowledge and experiences they have gained so that the international community can effectively tackle the problems in the regions.

We welcome the efforts of the Security Council, especially the adoption of the resolution today with regard to the situation in the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is one of the main destinations of the mission to Central Africa, I understand. It is our hope that the mission, through its direct assessment of the situation on the ground, will provide us with recommendations to consider carefully whether there is a need to expand the peacekeeping operation in the near future.

One of the most disheartening characteristics of the conflicts we are witnessing in West and Central Africa is their spillover from one country to another and, as a consequence, the regionalization, as it were, of those conflicts. Let me explain why I said "disheartening". Peace and stability in a society are essential for development. It is profoundly sad that the African continent, where development is perhaps more necessary than in any other region of the world, is most frequently faced with the scourge of conflicts. Some believe that conflicts erupt because of underdevelopment and others maintain that underdevelopment is a result of conflicts. I believe that both arguments have their own points and it might not be useful to judge which is more correct. It is a vicious circle that we must do our utmost to stop.

It is out of this awareness that Japan is supporting the ongoing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in Sierra Leone, for instance, while at the same time providing financial assistance, through the Economic Community of West African States, to the all-Liberia round-table conference that will be held next month in Ghana. Since the situations in Sierra Leone and Liberia are closely interrelated, it is our sincere hope that, by simultaneously restoring stability in those two neighbouring countries, we can prevent the spillover of the conflicts and enhance the stability of the entire subregion.

Of course, the resolution of a conflict depends ultimately upon the willingness and efforts of the conflicting parties themselves — that is, they must address their problems with a sense of ownership. But the achievement of this goal can and must be fostered through cooperation or partnership with the international community. Just this month, the Government of Japan announced its new Initiative for Cooperation for Africa, the three main pillars of which are consolidation of peace, human-centred development and poverty reduction through economic growth. Under the first pillar, we will support activities for the consolidation of peace in the fields of

reintegration of ex-combatants into civil society, demining, small arms and assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. These activities are implemented through Grant Aid for Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building and the Trust Fund for Human Security.

I am pleased to note that in Angola and Sierra Leone the prolonged conflicts have recently ended and peace has been restored. If those two countries are able to continue to promote their development as they have done since the end of the conflicts, their experience of success in building upon the peace will provide an important lesson and incentive for other conflict-torn countries in Africa. In this sense, Japan would like to commend and support as much as possible the efforts of those countries towards the consolidation of peace and the promotion of development.

Last but not least, I would like to refer to the point which the Ambassador of Bulgaria just stressed. I, too, believe that the cooperation of the countries of Africa is most appropriate and effective for the resolution of armed conflicts on the continent. We therefore strongly hope that the African Union, regional organizations and ad hoc groups of friendly African countries will pursue initiatives for the resolution of conflicts in Central and West Africa.

The President: The next speaker on my list is the representative of Malaysia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rastam (Malaysia): My delegation is pleased to see you, Sir, presiding over this important meeting of the Security Council. We join others in commending you and the delegation of Pakistan for your skilful and excellent stewardship of the Council during the month of May. We further commend you for the initiative of convening this meeting to discuss the efforts of the United Nations in promoting peace and security in Africa. Debate on this subject is most timely. We recognize the preoccupation of and importance attached by the Council to African issues, which take up some 60 per cent of its work. We welcome the Council's effort to refocus itself on the conflict situations in Africa, especially in light of recent tragic events there. We are very pleased that the Council adopted resolutions 1484 (2003) and 1485 (2003) this morning.

Peacekeeping constitutes an important instrument at the disposal of the Security Council. However, the Council must avoid selectivity and double standards in establishing United Nations peacekeeping operations, especially in Africa. Malaysia has contributed military and police personnel to most of the United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, beginning with the first mission in the Congo in the early 1960s.

Strong commitment and continued and sustained support in terms of manpower, financing and material by United Nations Member States are essential in ensuring the operational success of peacekeeping operations. The effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping missions should not be jeopardized by a lack of necessary funding and adequate and well-trained and equipped personnel from Member States. The Council and the Secretariat should make every effort to engage Member States, particularly troop-contributing countries, at the planning stage and at every subsequent phase of any particular operation. We all know that dispatching peacekeeping missions at less than their required strength and with inadequate equipment can result in tragic consequences, as has been the experience in the case of some previous and current operations. What has happened in Ituri province is a clear example. The dispatch of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force in support of the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a very positive and timely response by the international community.

Beyond the deployment of peacekeeping missions in existing conflict situations, there is a need for the Council and the United Nations as a whole to develop effective strategies for the prevention of armed conflict and for post-conflict peace-building, including efforts to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants in a post-conflict situation. Concrete measures must be taken to consolidate and sustain the peace. Malaysia associated itself closely with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) initiative during its membership of the Council in the years 1999 and 2000. We wish to reiterate our conviction that each and every component of the DDR process must be given due importance, equal emphasis and adequate funding to ensure success and the non-return of former combatants to conflict. Like all other United Nations programmes and activities, the problem of adequate funding in the effective implementation of the DDR programmes must be addressed. Generous support from the international community is critical, especially from those who have the means in terms of money and

technical expertise. The relevant organs and agencies of the United Nations must be fully involved in the post-conflict peace-building process. The private sector can certainly be encouraged to play an important role through reconstruction, investment and other relevant economic activities.

My delegation believes that there is a need for the Security Council — and the United Nations in general — to seriously and systematically address the root causes of conflict in ways that could minimize the potential for further and more protracted conflict and instability on the African continent. In that regard, we welcome the work of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 53/92. We sincerely hope that all the proposals made will be fully implemented. We also welcome the establishment of the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict and the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. A comprehensive and integrated approach towards African issues and better coordination in that regard within the United Nations system, involving the principal organs — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat — United Nations agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, should be urgent priorities.

My delegation also wishes to underscore the important role that can be played by regional organizations, arrangements and agencies in the promotion of regional peace and security as well as economic and social development. Regional cooperation can be a key to the creation of a peaceful and cooperative environment. The institutional linkages and mechanisms of cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union and subregional organizations must be strengthened. We welcome the revival in the African Union of organs responsible for conflict prevention and resolution and all other initiatives being pursued by the African Union (AU) — including the Peace and Security Council of the AU — in the promotion of peace and security on the continent.

My delegation strongly supports the practice of dispatching Security Council missions to conflict areas, not only to supplement the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat, but also, and more important, to enable Council members to better appreciate the situation on the ground and the complexities of the problems that the Council must deal with. We welcome the forthcoming Council missions to Central Africa and West Africa early next month. We agree with the statement in your non-paper, Mr. President, that

> "... the two missions should be a powerful signal to all parties to the conflicts in Africa that the Council intends to maintain its focus on African issues and will remain actively engaged with Africa".

Indeed, that powerful signal should not be seen as coming only from the Security Council; it should also be regarded as a strong message from the entire United Nations membership. We note that similar missions undertaken in the past have proved valuable to the Council's work. Malaysia participated in the Council's mission to East Timor in 1999. We would recommend that such exercises be undertaken on a more regular basis in the future, not only to Africa but also to other regions. That would demonstrate the Council's continuing commitment to ensuring the engagement of the United Nations in the promotion of peace and security. We look forward to being informed of the findings and recommendations of those missions.

In addressing the issues at hand, we all know what the problems essentially are, what ought to be done and where the responsibilities lie. There is clearly a need for more serious commitment and action on the part of all concerned: the Security Council, the entire United Nations membership, the rest of the United Nations system, the international community at large and, above all, the parties in conflict. We must all do our utmost to assist in resolving current conflicts in Africa and preventing new ones from occurring. The key to that lies in political will: the will to take the necessary measures and to follow up on them. That political will to act and to deal with conflict situations should be demonstrated in an even-handed fashion wherever they occur, whether in Africa or elsewhere.

We are impressed with the incremental but tangible steps that have already been taken by African countries themselves. We believe that all their efforts must be supported by the international community. The Security Council can help in further encouraging and generating that support through its actions and decisions. This debate is another step in the right

direction. We commend you, Mr. President, and the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Valdés (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, the delegation of Chile wishes to sincerely congratulate the Pakistani presidency on its excellent work in guiding the Security Council during this month of May and on the very timely choice of the theme "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security" for this wrap-up meeting.

For those of us who in recent months have been obliged to assess — not without anguish — the situation of a number of African countries that seem to be teetering unavoidably on a precipice of disintegration and violence, there could not be a more important theme than this one in the United Nations system. Without really knowing what to do, we have witnessed a macabre vicious circle marked by internal and external war; the dissolution of the authority and administrative capacity of the State; the gradual elimination of the economic and social potential of countries; the systematic violation of human rights; the existence of millions of refugees fleeing to countries that in turn are affected by grave economic crises; an increase in HIV/AIDS and in other epidemics and illnesses; the indiscriminate traffic in small arms and light weapons; the illegal exploitation of natural resources that finances such traffic; and, everywhere, hunger. And, amid that horror, we have witnessed the suffering of the weakest: the forced recruitment of children and the violation of rights that is suffered daily by African girls and women. The slow dissolution of colonial borders, the collapse of States and the emigration of the elite threaten the world with a humanitarian catastrophe that cannot fail to affect all of us.

We know full well that many others compiled that list of horrors before we did, and we are fearful and anguished at the lack of solutions. We sincerely hope that the dialogue that the Security Council missions undertake with political leaders in Central and West Africa will be translated into progress and effective commitments. However, we believe we must not harbour too many illusions. Experience shows that the exercise of finding out, listening and agreeing is insufficient if it is not accompanied by real and resolute political will to translate those experiences and exchanges into decisions and, later, into the implementation of stable and long-term policies.

Today, the Security Council is obliged to intervene in conflicts requiring urgent action by the international community — particularly in those whose dimensions and effects have a regional nature. The most illustrative cases are probably Liberia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We cannot allow those situations to lead to tragedies such as those that we have witnessed in the past. Chile welcomes the commendable attitude of France and other countries that have offered troops to assist the small group of Uruguayans who make up the peace force in Bunia.

However, even if we are able to prevent the continuation of those tragedies, we need to assess the effectiveness of the mechanisms currently used by the United Nations so that we can move from a focus on conflict management to one on conflict prevention and support for the role of regional and subregional organizations in managing such situations.

The demobilization and reintegration processes, which have been referred to repeatedly in these discussions, must be maintained and further emphasized. As was stated this morning by Ambassador Kumalo of South Africa, the African Union and initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development are awaiting support from the Security Council to promote the common vision of peace and sustainable development for the region, which has brought so many African leaders together.

We have seen the main tasks in the area of peace and security carried out by the African Union and by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Sierra Leone in the past and today in Côte d'Ivoire. We also recognize the usefulness of, and the need for, the expansion and strengthening of coordination between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. But that will not be sufficient unless the international financial organizations are also involved.

Conspiring against greater effectiveness of the mechanisms to which I referred earlier is, undoubtedly, a chronic shortage of resources. Greater investment by States with economic capacity in this area quite likely would benefit not only the local population but also, in future, the developed world, and would also help to avert greater migratory pressure than already exists.

Before concluding, let me say that we cannot fail to reflect on some of the underlying causes of the African conflicts. Underpinning each of our discussions on national cases is the issue of poverty and extreme underdevelopment in the region. There is no doubt that much bloodshed could be prevented and money saved if developed countries spearheaded a programme open to the entire international community aimed at intervening economically in those countries, providing them with appropriate technical experts, monitoring their economic decisions, generating investments and opening wide their doors to exports.

The promotion of national cases that have been successful in the area of development might have a very positive ripple effect in the region and enable it to emerge from the situation it is now in. But to that end political will is required. Political will means, for example, the reduction of subsidies to agricultural products that are presently in force in the markets of the rich countries. Political will means, for example, forgiving Africa's external debt. Measures such as these might be even more effective in alleviating poverty in Africa.

In this regard, we welcome the initiatives which many Governments have developed. We deem it important to highlight the initiative of the Government of the United States, and those of other countries, decisively to combat the AIDS epidemic in the continent. We hope that this is but one example of many more such examples in future that will contribute to the well-being of millions of African citizens.

The very credibility of our Organization once again is being put to the test in this African crisis. The United Nations must act. Our country is prepared to participate in all of the collective efforts launched and sacrifices made by the international community in this area.

The President: I thank Ambassador Valdés for the kind words he addressed to the Pakistan presidency.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish warmly to thank you, Sir, for having selected this issue for this wrap-up discussion. We feel that it is a very important issue and that it is quite timely, in view of the upcoming Security Council missions to Africa.

As Greece will be speaking on behalf of the European Union after my delegation has spoken, and in order to be brief, as is required for our statements today, we will limit ourselves to expressing our views on four points which, in my delegation's view, are of particular importance given the fact that these missions are about to take place — missions in which we will be involved.

First, I will touch on the subregional dimension, which is of extreme importance in the prevention and resolution of conflicts in Africa. We believe that subregional initiatives must have the support of the international community. In this regard, we are pleased to note the increasingly important role played by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in West Africa, and in particular its active participation in the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

We also have noted with interest the revitalization of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) in the context of the conflict in the Central African Republic. We also believe that it is important to revitalize the forum established by the Mano River Union, which could play a very important role in promoting confidence-building measures among its three member countries.

It is also encouraging to note at the regional level that the African Union is prepared to play an active role in managing and resolving conflicts, as can be seen in the mission now deployed in Burundi to supervise the ceasefire and to demobilize the rebel groups on a voluntary basis.

Secondly, the humanitarian situation is an integral part of conflicts and not a subsidiary or auxiliary one. It is essential for humanitarian questions to play a central role in the resolution phase of conflicts because, unfortunately, the repercussions of the complex conflicts taking place in Africa very dramatically affect civilian populations. My delegation would reiterate that it is unacceptable that in many cases the various warring factions do not allow humanitarian organizations access to the civilian population.

Thirdly, respect for human rights is a fundamental issue and is also related to the question of how to address the question of responsibility for violations of human rights in the resolution phase of a conflict. We deem impunity to be unacceptable. Only by establishing adequate mechanisms which ensure just treatment of this issue can progress be made in reconciliation, which is one of the greatest challenges for societies emerging from conflict.

Fourthly, and lastly, let me turn to the post-conflict phase. It is important for the Security Council to pay due attention to this phase, since its fragility is one of the greatest challenges facing those African States which have been able to emerge from conflict.

In many cases, this post-conflict phase takes place in a regional framework characterized by other conflicts and by the presence of destabilizing factors such as arms trafficking, the presence of mercenaries or the problem of refugees. It is very important, therefore, for the international community to follow up this post-conflict phase very closely, providing the required political and financial support.

In this regard, we welcome the increasingly close cooperation between the Council and the Economic and Social Council in establishing ad hoc groups, and we endorse the comments to this effect that were made this morning by Special Adviser Gambari.

To conclude, we express our gratitude once again for the choice of this issue for today's meeting. We are confident that the practical conclusions that we reach today will be integrated into the missions and that the principal recommendations of the missions will receive adequate follow-up from the Council.

The President: I thank the representative of Spain for her kind words addressed to the Pakistan delegation.

I now call on the representative of Greece. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Daratzikis (Greece): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The acceding countries Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia, the associated countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area Iceland declare that they align themselves with this statement.

The European Union firmly believes that the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa constitutes one of the major challenges of the international community at the dawn of the twenty-first century. In this regard, we recognize the importance of the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

The management of the intra-State and inter-State conflicts that still plague significant parts of the African continent and assistance to African countries emerging from such conflict situations, should, in our view, be among the highest priorities of the United Nations system. In that connection, the European Union strongly supports the action taken by the United Nations, in particular by the Security Council, in the fields of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building.

The establishment by the Security Council of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the Economic and Social Council's establishment of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict, together with the adoption by the General Assembly of the resolution on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, have provided useful mechanisms to address the multiple needs of those countries. At the same time, those actions indicate that there is an interactive relationship between security and development, as both are indispensable for the achievement of peace and sustainable development. The European Union welcomes the continued involvement of the international financial institutions in this process. They have an essential role to play in consolidating peace in countries emerging from conflict and in supporting efforts towards long-term growth and development.

Identifying and addressing the multidimensional root causes of conflicts in Africa is another important element in the long fight for peace and stability in the region. Dealing with issues such as socio-economic inequities and inequalities, systematic ethnic discrimination, the denial of human rights, disputes over political participation or long-standing grievances over land, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons and the illegal exploitation of natural resources is of critical importance in the process of moving from conflict management to prevention and final resolution. In our view, the existence of appropriate and effective mechanisms and institutions, including good governance and rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and addressing fundamental inequities, are of great importance for the early prevention of conflicts and a durable peace in the continent.

The European Union believes that a comprehensive approach to the root causes of conflicts in Africa would also benefit from enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies. In that regard, we look forward to having a fruitful discussion at the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, where item 40 (b) of the preliminary agenda provides the appropriate framework for further inputs to emerge.

The European Union considers that the two upcoming Security Council missions to the region will serve as a pointed reminder of the acute interest and engagement of the international community in Africa, especially at a time when conflicts in certain parts seem to be intensifying and even spreading to neighbouring countries. The missions will also contribute to the Council's better understanding of the complex situations at hand and offer a valuable opportunity for interaction with the various players on the ground.

Within the framework of the Europe-Africa dialogue, we have been working together to develop common approaches to this issue. The Cairo Summit's follow-up has indeed been showing our mutual commitment to this endeavour.

The European Union has been constant in its support of the efforts for regional and subregional cooperation and has been actively engaged in various relevant initiatives aimed at enhancing peacekeeping capacities in Africa. We encourage a close relationship between the United Nations and the African Union and subregional organizations, inter alia, the Economic Community of West African States, and we commend the recent efforts of those organizations in the area of peacekeeping operations in Africa.

The European Union also welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat's Department of Peacekeeping Operations to work closely with all relevant actors in Africa at the regional, subregional and national levels, in particular for the enhancement of the capabilities of troop contributors and in capacity-building for regional and subregional organizations. We welcome an active role for the United Nations, specifically in the areas of information-sharing, promoting transparency, mobilizing support and stimulating contacts between recipients and donors of assistance, for example, in training, equipment and logistics.

The establishment of the African Union was a particularly important development for the African continent. It has created new opportunities for strengthened economic cooperation, political partnership and cultural exchange between our two continents.

The European Union strongly welcomes the firm commitment of the African Union to peace and security. The decision taken at the African Union summit in Durban in July 2002 to establish an African Peace and Security Council and an African standby force for conducting peace support operations is a decisive and forward-looking step. The European Union considers that its implementation, including the swift ratification of the protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council in order to ensure its timely entry into force, would be a major achievement by the African Union member States. The European Union stands ready to continue its support geared towards strengthening African conflict prevention and resolution capabilities, in particular at the continental and regional levels.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that, in an emerging new age of political and economic development in Africa, the European Union will continue to contribute to Africa in as many sectors as possible and in every possible way, including through improved cooperation here at the United Nations, where the issue of promoting peace and security in Africa must continue to receive the highest level of priority and urgency.

The President: I thank the representative of Greece for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Uruguay. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Paolillo (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The serious problems affecting the African continent must be a matter of concern for all regions of the world. They require the utmost attention from all of our Governments, and they should be an absolute priority on the agendas of international organizations.

We must undertake concerted and energetic action to assist our brothers in Africa to overcome the enormous obstacles that are impeding, and even paralyzing, their efforts to achieve economic development and democratization. Some of those

obstacles are the result of centuries of being subjected to colonial rule, while others have resulted from long-standing rivalries. Yet others stem from extreme poverty and the precarious social conditions prevailing in some regions of the continent. It is a moral duty to assist Africa. If we do not carry out that duty, the rest of the world will not be at peace with itself.

I wish to reiterate Uruguay's solidarity with all the Governments and peoples of Africa, in particular with those experiencing crises at this moment. We have proven our solidarity by having participated for years in peacekeeping missions in a number of countries, including Mozambique, Angola, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Eritrea, Western Sahara and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The tragic events that have taken place in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have gained notoriety in recent days. Uruguay has been a part of the United Nations peacekeeping force in that country from the very beginning, with a contingent that currently numbers more than 1,600 men. Among other things, it was a naval unit from Uruguay that opened up navigation and river communications in the Congo River basin, which had been interrupted for over three years.

I would like to convey to the members of the Security Council the great concern of the Government and people of Uruguay over the delicate situation in which over 700 of our compatriots find themselves in Bunia, where Uruguay agreed to have part of its troops transferred in spite of the extreme danger in the region. Uruguay has no economic interest in the area, or in the Congo in general. Its presence in this unhappy country is in keeping with moral principles and with putting solidarity into action.

The situation of the civilian population and of the Uruguayan forces in Bunia is simply terrible. On the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe, and likely at any moment to become the victims of unbridled and mindless violence on the part of warring factions, the lives of the inhabitants of Bunia and of the Uruguayans attempting to protect them have become a nightmare that has now lasted for several weeks.

The Security Council has just adopted a desperately awaited resolution providing for the deployment of an Emergency Multinational Force to Bunia. Uruguay would like to express its gratitude to the Council for having done so. I would also like to thank the Governments of the countries that have expressed their readiness to participate in the Emergency Force, as well as to the Secretariat for its efforts aimed at expediting the preparation and deployment of the Force.

On behalf of my Government and of Uruguayans whose lives and physical and mental integrity are currently seriously under threat in Bunia, and on behalf of all of Uruguay, I urge that measures be adopted immediately to implement that resolution and to proceed to the deployment of the Emergency Force to Bunia as soon as possible, so as to restore calm, provide security for the population and protect everyone's lives. Any delay may be fatal for the inhabitants of Bunia and for members of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as — it must be said — for the credibility and prestige of the Organization.

Mr. Boubacar Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to express my delegation's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for the determination, skill and mastery with which you have guided the work of the Security Council during the month of May. I would also like to thank you for having organized this wrap-up meeting on the theme "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security". This very timely meeting it taking place as this body is preparing to send two missions to Africa next month — to Central Africa and to Western Africa, two subregions shaken by ongoing conflicts that are seriously threatening the peace and stability of the countries in those regions.

In his opening statement this morning, Ambassador Ibrahim Gambari, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Africa, provided a clear indication of the stakes involved in the task ahead, as well as of its scope. He also made some suggestions as to how to improve upon our approach, for which my delegation is grateful to him.

Our decision to send missions to Central and Western Africa leaves no room for doubt about our desire to contribute to the establishment of peace and development in these sensitive areas of the continent. It is up to us to benefit from those missions by making the necessary contacts at the governmental level and with political leaders and the civilian populations, so that we may have an objective view of the situations

and their consequences and be able to refine our methods of work to find appropriate solutions to the various situations involved. The victims of conflict desperately need this. They aspire only to calm and security in order to focus their energies on improving their welfare.

However, the Council cannot fully shoulder its responsibilities unless it acts with the utmost intelligence with regional and subregional actors, whose importance and usefulness in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts no longer needs to be demonstrated. That is why during our visits we must take due note of the regional dimension, listen closely to the points of view expressed by the various actors and take a comprehensive approach in order to contribute to a just and lasting settlement of the conflicts.

In addition, my delegation would like to point out that supporting the peace process necessarily requires strengthening peacekeeping missions. In that regard, we area pleased with the decisions taken by the Council to establish a United Nations mission in Côte d'Ivoire and to authorize the deployment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Furthermore, as a number of speakers have pointed out, the Council must not lose sight of the thorny issue of the proliferation and illegal circulation of light weapons, which further fuels such hotbeds of tension. A clear message must be sent by the two Council missions to all who are involved in that scourge, which is detrimental to the return to peace. Combating mercenary activities, which are developing at an alarming rate in West Africa, must not be overlooked, either.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reaffirm its profound conviction that the Council missions remain useful and very important exercises. It is our duty to ensure that they are further invigorated so that they can be more effective instruments in the service of international peace and security.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Africa represents the conscience of the world and its promising future. Africa stands for purity; it is the symbol of giving. On its vast land numerous races have come together, and through the determined efforts of its peoples it has helped to enrich the human heritage. On the basis of that understanding, my delegation extends its profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, and to your brotherly delegation, for having convened this important meeting. We would also like to thank Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his important statement.

We are deeply saddened to see a number of the States of Africa plagued by conflicts, many of which have been imposed upon them. Some of those conflicts have been raging for many years and have had unprecedented repercussions at the political, security, economic, social and humanitarian levels. Peace and security for the continent and its States are long overdue; Africa should no longer be punished for its rich endowment with natural resources and for its racial and ethnic diversity.

In spite of efforts made at a number of levels to resolve the problems faced by Africa, the desired results have not been achieved. We would like from the outset to reaffirm our belief that the international community should pay greater attention to Africa and should make a concerted effort to assist it in its development and to rehabilitate it after the destruction of the past few decades.

In recent years, the Security Council has spared no effort in trying to tackle the crises that have engulfed certain African countries. In an attempt to deal with these crises, the Council has established 12 missions to support or establish peace in various States on that continent. The Council's adoption this morning of a resolution to dispatch a multinational emergency force to the Ituri region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is further evidence of its active follow-up of the developments in the countries of that continent.

Such attention on the part of the Council can be placed within the context of interest shown by the other bodies of the United Nations. The General Assembly has made a notable effort, in particular by adopting the New Partnership for Africa's Development. The Economic and Social Council has also made a significant effort, and we must not forget the very important role played by Secretary-General Kofi Annan personally or through his special envoys and personal representatives in the region, to try to reconcile differing points of view and put an end to

conflict and military confrontation with a view to enabling the parties to implement the accords arrived at and the resolutions of the Council.

Despite such measures to resolve conflict and build peace, we believe that the international effort must be given further impetus. The Security Council recently dispatched missions to several States, including in southern Africa, East Africa and the Great Lakes region. The positive results of those missions have been reflected in the subsequent development of events. In this regard, we hope that the two forthcoming Council missions to Central and West Africa will be able to discharge the mandates assigned to them so that the desired results can be achieved.

Direct meetings between the members of the two missions and the leaders of about 12 States suffering from, or directly or indirectly involved in, such conflicts will be beneficial. The leaders of those States and the leaders of rival organizations must heed the call of the international community to end all forms of destruction and to all hostilities. This will be especially beneficial if accompanied by a firm stance with regard to those who circumvent the resolutions of international legitimacy or are reluctant to implement such resolutions.

Syria welcomed the establishment of the African Union and the start of work by its subsidiary bodies. It also supports the efforts being made by the Union to settle conflicts in Africa. We acknowledge in particular the role of the presidency of the African Union, South Africa, in this regard. We also welcome regional and subregional efforts to resolve conflicts in the States of that continent, especially the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States, as well as those of other regional organizations, such as the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development.

Syria calls upon the international community to enhance the material capabilities of African regional organizations so that they can effectively discharge their mandates. Experience has shown that we need to deal with African conflicts holistically and on a broad regional basis, given the fact that most neighbouring States are involved in the causes of the conflicts and need to be involved in the solutions. In this regard, we welcome the significant role played by the leaders of the African States to organize and mediate meetings with the goal of settling conflicts peacefully and of rebuilding mutual confidence and relations among States.

We reaffirm the need to deal with the root causes of conflict in Africa. We greatly appreciate the importance of the work of the Council's Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa and the need to put its recommendations into effect. A vital role should also be played by the international donor bodies and organizations, whose assistance in the reconstruction in Africa is of great importance.

As a member of the Security Council, Syria has sought to focus close attention on the problems facing Africa. Syria has called upon the international community in the past, and calls upon it today, to spare no effort to put an end to the conflicts ravaging numerous African States. We earnestly hope that, together, we will manage to fulfil the promise we made to Africa to help it to overcome its difficulties and continue to enrich human civilization and human progress.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Philippines. On behalf of the Council, I welcome him to the United Nations. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baja (Philippines): It is my pleasure to address the Security Council for the first time and my honour to do so under Pakistan's presidency and on an issue that is central to the work of the Council.

My delegation is likewise pleased to congratulate you, Sir, and your team on Pakistan's outstanding leadership of the Council this month, highlighted by the adoption of resolution 1483 (2003). We also congratulate Mexico on its commendable presidency last month.

My delegation also wishes to thank Under-Secretary-General Ibrahim Gambari for his statement this morning.

This Security Council meeting is timely, coming as it does two days before the G-8 summit to be chaired by France, which will address the issue of the New Partnership for Africa's Development as one of its themes. It is also important coming on the eve of the

two Security Council missions to Central and West Africa, to be led by France and the United Kingdom, respectively.

In recent weeks, the Security Council has demonstrated its unswerving commitment to safeguarding peace and security in Africa. The adoption of resolution 1479 (2003), which established the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, and this morning's adoption of resolution 1484 (2003) authorizing the deployment of a temporary Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia under the leadership of France, speak significantly loud and clear of the Council's determination to directly address conflicts in Africa.

The response of the Security Council to the Ivorian and Bunia crises and the role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in facilitating the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire and of the troop-contributing countries in the establishment of an Interim Emergency Multinational Force in Bunia are examples of cooperation which bear highlighting.

In this context, my delegation proposes the following, which we believe will further strengthen the resolution of conflicts in Africa.

First, Security Council partnership with regional groups in Africa, notably ECOWAS and the African Union, should be fully harnessed. In particular, the newly established African Union Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution offers rich resources to complement the efforts of the Council in conflict resolution.

Secondly, Security Council missions to conflict areas have contributed to a better understanding of the issues. They have been useful in facilitating the peace process and should be carried out with increased collaboration with relevant regional groups on the ground. In this context, my delegation strongly supports the regional approach of the Council in dealing with specific conflicts in Africa through the forthcoming Council missions. We hope that these missions will be successful in accomplishing their objectives.

Thirdly, an integrated approach that will bring together all relevant United Nations actors involved in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction should be consistently adopted in dealing with conflict situations in Africa. We welcome the trend towards strengthened cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in this area. In this regard, my delegation wishes to note the success of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau. Other mechanisms, such as the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, the Group of Friends and the special representatives of the Secretary-General can also contribute to this integrated approach.

We believe that the Africans themselves have the capacity to play the key role in promoting peace and security in their region, and the international community should support them in these efforts. Through the promotion of peace and security in Africa, the economic development and progress of the region are also enhanced.

Finally, important as conflict resolution may be, my delegation emphasizes the need to focus and develop appropriate conflict-prevention strategies as priority measures to promote peace and security in Africa and in all regions, for that matter.

The President: I thank the representative of the Philippines for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ileka (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Now that your presidency of the Security Council for this month is drawing to an end, Sir, allow me to express my delegation's satisfaction with the outstanding manner in which you have carried out your noble mission and to pay tribute to your skills and competence.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by the representative of the sisterly Republic of the Congo, who, with his customary clarity and eloquence, gave, on behalf of the countries of the Economic Community of Central African States, an outline of developments in our community in the area of peace and security. My delegation will therefore limit its statement to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

While we sincerely thank the Security Council for keeping the situation in our country among its priorities, we take this opportunity also to express our

gratitude for this morning's unanimous response to the request of the Secretary-General to deploy as soon as possible a multinational force in Bunia with a view to helping a return to normalcy in Ituri, a district of Orientale province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that has been stricken, for the second time in just a few months, by the misdeeds of the forces of evil. Orchestrated by two neighbouring countries, the events in Bunia are strikingly similar to those we have seen in Kisangani, where the regular armies of those same two countries clashed on several occasions with heavy weapons, claiming thousands of victims. The sheer numbers of callous warlords in Ituri, like those further south in the provinces of Nord-Kivu, Sud-Kivu and Maniema, are of such great concern that some are now even talking about the "Somalization" of that part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Worse still, the atrocities enable us to draw a certain parallel to other events, such as those carried out about 10 years ago in Rwanda, where a terrible genocide occurred. Broadcasts by Thomas Lubanga's Radio Candip remind us quite starkly of those aired by Radio Mille Collines of such sad memory.

Ituri is but one symptom of the general situation in the country. Recent massacres there compound a long and macabre list of massive violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law since the outbreak of the war of aggression on 2 August 1998. Ituri is just a new catastrophe in the Congolese tragedy. There are hundreds of verified deaths, thousands of internally displaced persons and thousands of people living in subhuman conditions in and around MONUC areas, where they are seeking refuge under the protection of Uruguayan troops, who have done excellent work. My delegation cannot fail to recall that members of the international community have paid a heavy price. Two representatives of the Red Cross and two MONUC officers, far from their families, fully committed to the cause of returning peace and dignity to our country, were savagely murdered. Their bodies were found mutilated beyond what one can imagine.

In the light of all those atrocities, it is important that the international community's message not be hampered by ambiguity. The message must be made clear, and the Security Council must send a strong signal to those who commit such atrocities. For example, those responsible for the murders committed on 14 and 15 May 2002 in Kisangani — whose names are in official United Nations reports — are still moving about freely and continue to attend to their business. In such cases, how can a potential violator of human rights and of international humanitarian law not feel safe to commit another crime if he knows beforehand that, after committing it, not only will he go unpunished, but perhaps he might even benefit from a minor perquisite or a bonus, granted on the altar of peace.

That is the case with Thomas Lubanga, a former inmate of the central prison of Makala, in Kinshasa, and a well-known criminal and terrorist. Are we to consider him for what he really is — I repeat, a criminal — or are we to lay out the red carpet for him? At a time when the Security Council is resolutely committed to the stabilization of Ituri and, therefore, of the entire Democratic Republic of the Congo and the whole Great Lakes region, Ituri will undoubtedly be an important test of the will of the nation and of the international community.

In the context of the partnership that has fortunately been forged among the Security Council, the African Union and the parties involved or interested in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council has taken the initiative of dispatching a mission to the region on a regular basis. We note with satisfaction that every Council mission visit has given rise to notable progress in the peace process. We are convinced that the same will apply to the mission to Central Africa, which we will have the signal honour to host in a few days' time in Kinshasa. The challenges are immense, certainly, but they are not insurmountable.

In the immediate future, particular emphasis should be placed on the implementation of the transition and on the completion of the ongoing peace process. The cessation of hostilities throughout the national territory -- more particularly in the east — is crucial in order to enable the Transitional Government to establish its authority, in conformity with the relevant Security Council resolutions with the Lusaka Agreement and with other subsequent partial agreements.

The reforms envisaged by the Transitional Constitution deserve to be supported. Reform of the army — a crucial attribute of the sovereignty and defence of national territory — must be supported and accelerated, particularly in the context of the swift formation of an inclusive and republican army. Reform

of the judicial system, for its part, should be a priority so that we can deal with the thorny question of the administration of justice and impunity. The millions of Congolese men and women who have suffered grievously from armed aggression and from atrocities committed by warlords are demanding justice. They cannot be denied it.

The Ituri Pacification Commission's resolutions also deserve to be supported unreservedly. They must be fully implemented. However, it should be pointed out that the tasks of pacification, reconciliation and respect for law and order are functions that belong to a governmental entity. Therefore, the capacities of the Transitional Government deserve to be strengthened to that effect.

In the short and medium term, the concepts of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation (DDRR) and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation or resettlement (DDRRR) should be rethought if we wish them to be truly effective. Naturally, they should pertain to the groups mentioned in the annexes to the Lusaka Agreement, but they should also extend to those that were created recently, some of which are fighting in Ituri. It is also essential to create a viable mechanism to halt the circulation of small arms and light weapons, which creates situations of instability, veritable breeding grounds for all kinds of criminal, organized crime and terrorist networks. In that connection, we followed with much interest the views expressed this afternoon by the delegations of Germany, Bulgaria and Guinea.

We must also put an end to the illegal exploitation of natural resources. Such resources are ultimately a curse for the countries that by chance possess them. Those countries, including ours, are extremely poor and represent nearly all of the world's conflicts. In parallel, it would be useful to combine the region's various peace processes in a comprehensive approach. The Arusha process, for Burundi, is well under way and seems to be on the right path. The Lusaka process, for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is irreversible. We hope that both processes succeed and that a free and democratic space is created. That will be good for the Great Lakes region. Then it will be important that the region's two other countries take into account the efforts undoubtedly being undertaken with a view to genuine democracy, reconciliation and national harmony.

Over the long term, the organization and convening of an international conference on peace and security in the Great Lakes region is becoming an absolute necessity. Such a conference, from our point of view, would be the most viable forum for laying the foundations for new relations marked by respect and trust among the region's countries. Once peace is restored, Congolese men and women will not fail to share with the world their vision of what they intend to accomplish for the happiness of present and future generations. We hope to share and to realize our dream with the assistance of you, the members of the international community.

Before I conclude, my delegation would like to ask the Security Council to be so kind as to express to the Secretary-General our gratitude for his tireless efforts to restore peace in our country. We are grateful to him for his recent initiative and take this opportunity to sincerely thank, again through you, Mr. President, all the countries that decided to respond favourably to it in one form or another. These thanks for the Council's tireless and unfailing commitment to the Congolese people will be reiterated in several days' time by the Republic's most authorized spokesman.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this wrap-up meeting to discuss Security Council missions to Africa and United Nations promotion of peace and security in Africa. We also wish to thank Ambassador Gambari, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his statement.

Recently, the situation in Central Africa — particularly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo — has become extremely worrisome; the peace process there faces a number of challenges. In West Africa, the peace in Sierra Leone must still be consolidated, the conflict in Liberia has yet to be resolved and the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is still beset with destabilizing factors. The Security Council missions to those two regions in June are both necessary and timely. We hope that they will play an effective role in promoting the peace processes in both regions.

In recent years, the Security Council has been actively engaged in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in the consolidation of peace. It has made some headway, but it has also faced difficulties and

problems. Today I wish to dwell on one question, namely, the importance of putting the maintenance of peace and security on a sound economic and financial footing.

The African continent is richly endowed with natural resources. This is true of both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone. However, due to various factors, economic and financial security often becomes a sticking point in the process of ending conflicts and rebuilding peace.

Indeed, the inability to procure adequate economic and financial resources has a negative effect on the promotion of peace processes. In this respect, it should be noted that, in recent years, cooperation between the United Nations and international financial institutions, including the World Bank, has been stepped up, and that coordination among various organs of the United Nations system — for instance, between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council — has also been enhanced.

Insufficient funding during peace processes remains a difficult problem. For example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through its peacekeeping operation in Côte d'Ivoire, has played an instrumental role in stabilizing the situation in the country. However, the peacekeeping operation is strapped for cash. In Sierra Leone, the process of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants has been stalled by the lack of funding.

Following the end of conflicts and the achievement of peace, countries still face serious difficulties, which may become new triggers for a further round of turmoil. For example, in Guinea-Bissau the relevant peace agreements are being implemented, but the grave economic difficulties it faces threaten to plunge it into another war.

Economic and financial guarantees therefore represent a serious issue for the Security Council in its task of preventing and managing and forestalling the recurrence of conflicts in Africa.

The United Nations, including the Security Council, should strive for effective solutions to enable the Organization to enhance its capacity for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President: I thank Ambassador Wang Yingfan for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the President of the Security Council for putting forward for consideration at this month's wrap-up meeting of the Council the topic of conflicts in Africa, with a view to the dispatch to that continent of two Council missions. Our discussions have made clear the great practicality and usefulness of such an action. The exchange of views that took place today will certainly help members of the Security Council in their work during the course of their trip to Africa.

Russia agrees with the general conviction as to the link between peace and development. We support the elaboration of a comprehensive and thorough approach to the settlement and prevention of conflicts and to the elimination of poverty, with a view to ensuring development and the strengthening of democracy on the African continent. We believe that priority should be accorded to the use of political and diplomatic methods and to the overcoming of obstacles that could contribute to the emergence and continuation of conflicts. There can be no doubt that the Africans themselves must play a key role in this respect.

Russia is actively participating in peacekeeping efforts in Africa; Russian representatives are involved in all United Nations peacekeeping operations on the continent.

Africa has not been spared new challenges and threats. It is important that in its approach to these problems, the Security Council act with the same determination and serious-mindedness as it does in other regions. Double standards are inadmissible. This idea has already been expressed in this Chamber by the representative of Malaysia, and we support it.

The planned Security Council missions will have to cope with and evaluate a fresh threat to the African continent: the spread of illegal armed groups. Often these groups pose a threat to the constitutional foundation, and even the very existence, of sovereign States. This was stated eloquently earlier in the meeting by the representative of the Congo, Mr. Ikouebe.

In many cases, these groups have no programme whatsoever, save their desire to seize power at any cost. The price for this can be many tens of thousands of peaceful African lives. Since these groups plunder and rape and kill the civilian population, how do they differ from terrorists? Today's statement by the

Permanent Representative of Burundi, Mr. Nteturuye, shows that the Africans themselves hold such views.

Quite frequently armed groups are manipulated from abroad and become an extension of the interests of neighbouring countries. This phenomenon has become regional in nature, and poses a threat to international peace and security. With a view to averting the worst-case scenario, Governments must engage in contacts with these armed groups and make compromises within the framework of an intra-national dialogue. This is explainable and understandable, and each situation requires individual consideration. Nevertheless, such an approach leads to the legalization of the rebels and to a situation whereby, instead of resorting to constitutional means of resolving internal problems, a choice is made in favour of violence.

The question of border security requires a fresh approach. For historical reasons, African borders have always been porous. This has allowed them to retain the ethnic linkages of tribes and has helped in border cooperation.

Now, however, the permeability and vulnerability of borders has in many cases become the reason for the spillover of conflict situations, unrestricted flows of illegal arms, smuggling, trans-border crime, the illegal export of natural resources and the movement of armed groups and mercenaries.

The Security Council missions should draw attention to this problem, which could lead to further destabilization in various African regions. Russia supports the efforts undertaken by the United Nations to strengthen Africa's peacekeeping potential and the establishment of an effective partnership and of cooperation in the area of the maintenance of peace.

Of great promise is cooperation among the African peacekeeping structures with the Group of Eight. We agree with the views expressed in this regard by the Ambassador of Germany, Ambassador Pleuger. We note with satisfaction the intensification of peacekeeping efforts on the part of the African Union and such subregional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Government Authority on Development (IGAD).

We welcome the major contribution to peacekeeping made by a great number of African States. However, we are concerned that, in some cases, the assessments of the Security Council and African institutions do not coincide. As well, the requests of our partners in Africa do not always find support on the Council.

In that connection, we agree with the proposal made by the Chairman of the Group of African States, the Permanent Representative of Mauritius, Mr. Koonjul, to hold consultations between the Security Council and the African Union. We support the views expressed by the representative of Angola, Mr. Gaspar Martins, on cooperation with subregional organizations. We should heed the view of the Economic Community of Central African States on the mandate for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as expressed today by the representative of the Republic of the Congo, Mr. Ikouebe.

A number of delegations referred today to sanctions as a way of dealing with those who violate international peace and security. Sanctions are a very powerful weapon, and sanctions regimes can be imposed by the Security Council alone. Such regimes are inadmissible when, as one group of United Nations experts recently reported, those targeted are unaware they are the object of sanctions. The Security Council must carefully follow up on the implementation of its own resolutions. During its trip to West Africa, the Security Council will be able to see to what extent its sanctions regimes have been effective in the case of certain States of the region.

The Security Council regularly examines post-conflict recovery situations in various African States. We are concerned about the gaps and complications that have arisen in some cases: the military coup in the Central African Republic and difficulties in the post-conflict process in Guinea-Bissau. We hope that in the latter case the Security Council mission will be able to make a constructive contribution to a smooth continuation of that process. We believe that the Security Council missions to Central and West Africa will be able to get a first-hand view of the humanitarian situation in conflict zones.

The information coming in shows that in those areas, there exists heinous, merciless cruelty towards the civilian population. Senseless killings are being

carried out with machetes, which have become a weapon of mass destruction. We are observing a phenomenon that is incompatible with civilization in the twenty-first century. Child combatants are drawn into endless violence. Security Council missions must send a clear signal to the parties concerned: those who commit crimes against humanity will inexorably be brought to justice. The guilty will be punished for the crimes they have committed. We support the statement in that regard from the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Ileka. The blood and ashes of innocent victims make this our duty.

Virtually all African conflicts have a regional dimension. The positions of neighbours and other regional factors to a great extent determine the success or failure of international efforts to settle those conflicts. Russia proposes that during the Security Council mission to Central Africa we sound out the views of the States of the Great Lakes region on the idea of adopting a declaration on good neighbourliness, which could then be transformed into a good-neighbourliness pact. As we see it, work on such a document would promote mutual understanding among the States in that part of the African continent, help to solve ongoing problems and strengthen trust among the States. It could be an important step in preparing for the international conference on the Great Lakes region.

There are no quick fixes for the enormous problems of settling African conflicts. We need multifaceted, painstaking efforts both from the friends of Africa and, first and foremost, from Africans themselves. We hope that the forthcoming Security Council missions to the continent, in accordance with the mandates approved, will help to formulate solutions to those conflicts and to face new challenges and threats to Africa.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamanzi (Rwanda): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to extend to you, Mr. President, my sincere thanks for convening this important meeting on peace and conflict in Africa. I would also like to congratulate you on the remarkable job done by the Security Council in the course of the month of May, during your tenure. Moreover, my delegation expresses its high appreciation for the assessment and recommendations made this morning by Ambassador Gambari. My delegation also fully endorses the statement made by the representative of the Congo on behalf of Central African countries on the evolution of the pacification process in the area.

These last months have witnessed the awful and sad events that took place in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, where numerous innocent civilians were disgracefully massacred or forced into displacement and subsequent misery. Those events happened at a time when the Congolese had just agreed upon a political framework for putting in place transitional structures aimed at achieving long-lasting peace and security for the people of the country and for the neighbouring countries.

The magnitude of those events requires that the international community provide unconditional support to all the Congolese parties in this process towards achieving durable peace. A substantial commitment from the international community is indeed needed to help the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to build trust among themselves and to strive for national unity.

In this regard, the Government of Rwanda appreciates Secretary-General Kofi Annan's noteworthy initiative of carrying out consultations for the deployment of a neutral multinational force, whose main mission is to bring relief to the population of Ituri and to prevent a further humanitarian catastrophe in the region.

Those populations have indeed been suffering as a result of the chaotic and unsafe situation favoured by the absence of the appropriate dynamic in implementing the Lusaka and Pretoria political frameworks. The Government of Rwanda advocates that the multinational force be a strong support for the pacification process without interfering with the Lusaka and Pretoria frameworks, which constitute a pivotal reference for the restoration of durable peace and security for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for all the other countries in the Great Lakes region.

The Government of Rwanda also welcomes the forthcoming mission of the Security Council to Central Africa, which is to take place in the course of June. This is a crucial step in giving impetus to the pacification process taking place in the countries of the Great Lakes region, especially in the Democratic

Republic of the Congo and Burundi. The mission should seek to help the Congolese protagonists to identify ways and means to overcome the outstanding impediments to putting in place national and integrated transitional structures. A strong appeal to the various Congolese parties, especially the Government in place in Kinshasa, to show more political will and openness would be very valuable in rescuing the good results achieved so far through the remarkable regional and international peace initiatives undertaken for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As far as Burundi is concerned, the Government of Rwanda would like to express its wish to see the Security Council mission contribute to strengthening the mechanisms for the implementation of the Arusha peace accords so as to achieve a speedy restoration of peace all over the territory of Burundi. Recommendations regarding the African mission in Burundi should be made in the vein of consolidating its efficiency on the ground for the utmost security and good of the people of Burundi.

The President: I thank the representative of Rwanda for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Hachani (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, first of all, to congratulate you, Mr. President, for the excellent manner in which Pakistan and you yourself have guided the work of the Security Council during the month of May. You proposed an agenda that took into account the varied interests of the Security Council with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

During their respective presidencies of the Council, many delegations have initiated important thematic debates. That has made possible an exchange of views and a broadening of the concept of international peace and security. The outcome of those various discussions should serve the Council as a reference in approaching the issues it takes up. The fact that several non-members of the Council take part in this exhaustive exercise is a positive sign that the Council should take advantage of.

The relevance of the theme put forth by the President for the Council's discussion today should also be highlighted, especially as it enables us to consider as much as possible tension and conflict situations in their regional and subregional contexts and to ensure that there is greater interaction between the Council and subregional actors in the quest for solutions to problems.

It is reassuring to note that conflicts in Africa are the subject of constant follow-up by the Security Council, and that sustained and sincere efforts are being made by all members to alleviate as much as possible the political, economic and social ills that afflict our continent. However, it is important that the Council's commitment to Africa be enhanced even further. It would perhaps be appropriate for the Council to occasionally carry out an evaluation — as it is doing today — of its own actions with regard to ongoing and increasingly complicated African conflicts in order to lay out the real problems and, if necessary, explore new avenues that may provide the most favourable solutions for those problems.

The missions to be carried out by the Security Council to two African regions next month are in several respects innovative initiatives. They are to be welcomed, as they make possible direct involvement in helping the parties to conflicts to negotiate a peaceful and speedy solution to their disputes.

The recognition of the interdependence of the situations in the Central and Western African subregions, as well as of the role played by the African Union and other African participants, is a good illustration of the way in which we should proceed so that Council may effectively become aware of subregional machinery falling within the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter. In developing their relations, the United Nations and the African Union have already established machinery for consultation and cooperation aimed at improving the joint efforts of the two organizations, in particular in the areas of maintaining peace and preventing conflict. In that regard, it is important to emphasize that the efforts and initiatives to be carried out should be based on parameters established by African States themselves in pursuance of the principles and objectives of the African Union and in close cooperation with the Security Council.

Similarly, and given the fact that the activities of the United Nations and of the African Union complement each another in the maintenance of peace and in preventing conflict, we believe that it is

essential that the international community give all due importance to strengthening Africa's capacity through substantial material and financial support for the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa.

Tunisia has constantly strengthened its participation in peace efforts carried out by the Security Council. We believe those efforts should be part of a comprehensive approach that takes into account political, social and economic aspects. In particular, it should take into account the close linkage among development, peace and security. It is therefore important for my country to see the development of an international strategy that is based on integrated steps and that makes it possible to address the deep-rooted causes of conflict, such as poverty and exclusion. Such an approach requires greater involvement by development bodies and an emphasis on quick-impact programmes that can contribute to helping populations emerging from conflict to resume normal lives.

It is for that reason that we believe that we must continue to insist on the need for the Security Council to authorize the participation of countries affected by conflict, United Nations actors and others in the preparation, expansion and renewal of the mandates of United Nations missions. That would make it possible to take into consideration their views and reconstruction expertise, as well as the urgent needs of countries in conflict, thereby guaranteeing the success of those missions.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Mrs. Mulamula (United Republic of Tanzania): I am all for breaking the monotony of your duties, Mr. President, by mainstreaming the female agenda, and especially by participating in today's debate.

My delegation is grateful to you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting on conflicts in Africa, a subject of great concern to our continent. Indeed, Tanzania recognizes and appreciates Pakistan's contribution to United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa.

The fact that this meeting is being held the day after we observed the first International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers is in itself laudable. Allow me to pay tribute to the more than 1,800 peacekeepers who have lost their lives serving in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

In the recent past, Africa has occupied no less than 60 per cent of the Security Council's agenda. While that is not a source of pride for Africa, it is a demonstration of the Council's commitment to resolving what seem to be endless conflicts in our continent. We commend the Council for having succeeded in restoring peace in Sierra Leone and in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Those achievements notwithstanding, conflicts in Africa rage unabated, causing millions of deaths, displacing civilians, separating families and devastating economies, to say nothing of the destruction to property and infrastructure that they cause.

It is not my intention to revisit the root causes of conflict in Africa. The Secretary-General's comprehensive report of April 1998 (S/1998/318) and subsequent reports have resulted in resolutions being adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. It is important, however, always to bear in mind that, without addressing the root causes, it will not be easy to resolve the conflicts afflicting the African continent.

In this context, my delegation wishes to remind the Council that it should attach the greatest importance to the implementation of, inter alia, the Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Consensus and the conclusions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held last year in Johannesburg. Poverty eradication remains an overarching priority if we are to achieve durable peace and sustainable development.

If words were deeds, Africa could be sailing through a conflict-free environment, since so many statements, proposals, resolutions and action plans have been put forward in this Chamber. The question before us, therefore, is how much we have achieved as a consequence of the numerous meetings and debates that have been held and the resulting statements and resolutions. I believe that the search for an answer to that question underlines the significance of today's debate.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains unresolved, despite the achievements on the political front. The Security Council must act, and act swiftly, if we are to avoid a genocidal and humanitarian catastrophe in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo — the troubled region of Ituri. While we welcome today's action by the Council in authorizing the deployment of a multinational force to Bunia, that, as specifically set out in the resolution adopted earlier, is an interim measure. It is our hope that the Secretary-General will be able to deploy a more robust and effective force to effectively deal with the situation on the ground so as to ensure the restoration of lasting peace and stability in the whole of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The killings in Bunia are a sad testimony to the inept mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Any future mandate given to MONUC short of Chapter VII of the Charter, as envisaged in the Lusaka Accord, would fail the Congolese people, on whose behalf that peace agreement was signed.

The commitment of the Government of the United Republic Tanzania to the restoration of peace in the Great Lakes region needs no elaboration. Tanzania recently signed a MONUC status-of-mission agreement with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations as part of our effort to strengthen and facilitate the effective presence of MONUC in peace-building efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The smooth transfer of power of the transitional Government in Burundi was a matter of great satisfaction for Tanzania. Tanzania thus welcomes the decision of the Council to send a mission — including a visit to Tanzania — to the region, which will allow Council members, inter alia, to assess the situation on the ground and to obtain first-hand information from the parties. Hopefully, the visit will convince the Council to take further concrete measures in advancing the peace process and to seriously attempt to find a lasting solution to end the conflicts raging in the region and to achieve durable peace and stability.

In welcoming the forthcoming mission of the Council to our region, I would like to take this opportunity to assure you, Mr. President, of Tanzania's unwavering commitment to, continued support for and cooperation in efforts towards the restoration of lasting peace in the Great Lakes region.

Finally, we would like to call upon the Council to gather up the necessary political will and implement fully all that it has committed itself to doing in Africa through its several resolutions and presidential statements. We have confidence that a determined Security Council can bring results that will be in the interests of lasting peace and stability in Africa and, in particular, in the Great Lakes region.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania for her kind words addressed to me.

I would now like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

I would like at the outset to express Pakistan's thanks and gratitude to all members of the Council, non-Council members and other speakers for their participation in today's meetings. I am especially grateful to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, for his enlightening statement. I would also like to thank Ambassador De La Sablière and Ambassador Greenstock for their statements and for agreeing to lead the two Security Council missions to Central Africa and West Africa, respectively. Pakistan wishes those two important missions every success.

The remarks that have been made in our discussion by representatives from Africa have enhanced our understanding of the situation on the continent. Clearly, Africa faces imposing challenges posed by hunger, disease and poverty, as well as by the conflicts that are continuing in various parts of the continent, with grave consequences in terms of human suffering, instability and pervasive underdevelopment.

The causes of the conflicts are complex: ethnic and national rivalries, the illegal exploitation of natural resources, foreign intervention, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the use of mercenaries and child soldiers, human rights violations, refugee movements and internal displacement, as well as the spread of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS. The root cause of many of the conflicts is, above all, pervasive poverty and hunger, and the representative of Tanzania provided a timely reminder to the Council of the importance of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Monterrey Consensus.

The illegal exploitation of the natural resources of African countries fuels these conflicts. The control of resource-rich areas appears to be a major military objective of most of the warring groups, rebel movements and Governments alike. We have had conflict diamonds in the case of West Africa and, now, conflict timber in the case of Liberia. Next, we may perhaps be dealing with conflict gold or platinum, and the list could be endless.

The Security Council must adopt an active approach designed to create peace in Africa. The approach of the Council should be comprehensive and it should aim at durable solutions. Clearly, such durable solutions would need to encompass several aspects.

First, they must generate ownership of the solutions by the parties concerned. Secondly, they must be accompanied by the political will of those who support peace at the domestic, national, regional and international levels. Thirdly, these solutions must be accompanied by the provision of adequate resources and financial assistance for the purposes of peace-building and peace sustenance. In the long term, the best solutions for conflicts would be the integration of these nations and regions into the world system of trade and finance on an equitable and sustainable basis. Fourthly, such solutions must encompass humanitarian action and respect for humanitarian law. Fifthly, they should be accompanied by disarmament, demobilization and reintegration actions, which have been successful in many cases in the recent past. They must encourage regional approaches, since many of the conflicts are interlinked and interdependent. Lastly, such solutions must be based on the determination of the Security Council to implement its decisions and to ensure that agreements that are concluded are adhered to by the parties concerned. The Council's sanctions can be targeted and can be made more effective to ensure such results.

The Council could also consider enhancing the effectiveness of the mechanisms which it deploys for the resolution of conflicts. First, the mechanism of the special representatives of the Secretary-General have proved to be valuable not only in Africa, but elsewhere as well, and these must receive full support from the Security Council. Secondly, the Security Council's missions, such as the two which are going to West and Central Africa, are also increasingly useful in bringing home to the Council the realities of the conflicts and in bringing home to those parties concerned the attention and focus of the Security Council on these conflicts. Thirdly, peacekeeping operations, in Africa as elsewhere, must be accompanied by a robust mandate and adequate resources.

Pakistan, which has participated actively in peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Africa and elsewhere, supports the strengthening of the mandate and the size of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to effectively achieve its objectives. We welcome the adoption of the resolution on the Democratic Republic of the Congo this morning for the deployment of the Interim Emergency Multinational Force, to which Pakistan will positively consider contributing a contingent with a robust force to achieve the objectives for which the Multinational Force has been established.

We would suggest consideration of two new possible mechanisms by the Security Council. First, the Council could create enquiry bodies to establish the facts in the case of certain crises. These enquiry bodies could work along the lines of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in order to trace the resources and to chase the money trail back to those who finance and fuel various conflicts in various parts of Africa. Secondly, we would suggest that, since the security, political, economic and social dimensions of conflicts are interlinked, it is crucial for the United Nations to enhance coordination and complementarity in the work of its three principal organs in order to create durable solutions.

A way to do this could be to build on the existing cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council and to establish ad hoc composite committees, with membership drawn from the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Such composite committees could generate a coherent and mutually supportive response to the internecine conflicts and complex crises in Africa and, perhaps, elsewhere. Such composite committees could look at complex emergencies from different perspectives and thus generate coherent solutions. This approach would also reduce the burden on the Security Council, which is increasingly finding itself preoccupied with internal political, economic and development issues in various conflict situations. The involvement of the larger number of States Members of the United Nations in the composite committees would also promote greater participation and greater transparency in the work

involved in the prevention of conflicts, the management of conflicts and the solution of conflicts. In this context, the role of the Council would remain that of an executive branch in promoting the implementation of comprehensive, coherent and proactive approaches. This could also prove to be an effective complement for the realization of the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I request Mr. Gambari, if he has any additional comments, to take the floor.

Mr. Gambari: On behalf of the Secretariat, I would like to thank you, Sir, for your initiative of organizing this meeting and all the members of the Council, as well as the delegations that took the floor to speak on this important and timely topic, "Conflicts in Africa: Security Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace and security". In particular, my new Office, which has responsibility for preparing reports to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on critical issues affecting Africa, especially the nexus between peace and development, is grateful for those interventions. All of us in the Secretariat will reflect on the views and the proposals made today and will continue to offer our support for Security Council missions to Africa and other United Nations system-wide mechanisms to promote peace and security, especially in Africa.

The recommendations made today relating to the forthcoming missions to Central and West Africa can only strengthen the terms of reference for the missions and enhance a successful outcome. I hope that those suggestions will be taken on board. In my view, Security Council missions to Africa are not goals in themselves. Of course, the missions demonstrate solidarity with the millions of Africans in conflict areas, in particular the millions of women and children who suffer disproportionately from the multiplicity of conflicts on the continent. Council missions also represent valuable further education for those who participate and for Council members who receive their reports upon their return to Headquarters.

Beyond all that, however, it is essential that missions add real value to existing concrete efforts in support of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa. In that regard, missions and the Security Council as a whole will need to avoid situations where expectations for peace and development in Africa are raised, only to be subsequently disappointed. It is true, of course, that a primary responsibility for resolving conflict in Africa lies with Africans themselves. However, there is growing evidence in Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi and elsewhere that Africans are serious in their commitment to peace and security in their respective subregions and in the region as a whole. Therefore, the international community, led by the United Nations and spearheaded by the Security Council, has a responsibility under the Charter to support those efforts.

Finally, our discussion today has pointed to a number of key conclusions that, I believe, must guide future action by the Security Council and by the United Nations system as a whole.

First, priority must be accorded to conflict prevention and to post-conflict peace-building in Africa. In that regard, poverty eradication, encouraging the politics of inclusion and addressing other root causes of conflicts must be tackled as a matter of urgency.

Secondly, helping Africans to build capacity for peace operations is essential. In most cases, they have the human resources and a tradition of peacekeeping, but not the logistics or the financial resources to mount large-scale peacekeeping operations on the continent.

Thirdly, the regional dimensions of conflicts in Africa must be taken fully into account in United Nations efforts to resolve conflicts there.

Fourthly, working with the African Union and subregional organizations is a necessity, not a privilege, in our efforts to prevent and resolve African conflict.

Fifthly, it is essential to establish reliable and sustained lines of communication with key actors and parties to conflicts on the ground in Africa, and with those outside Africa who have influence on those parties, so that the Security Council's resolutions and presidential statements are transmitted, received and accepted by the parties on the ground. As we all know, it is one thing to adopt resolutions and to issue presidential statements here in New York and quite another for those statements and resolutions to be understood and respected by the parties to conflicts on the ground in Africa.

Finally, periodic joint meetings between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and even joint missions of both organs to conflict areas in Africa, may be considered as useful tools, especially for realizing the peace-building objectives that we all share. Above all — as you said only a few minutes ago, Mr. President — Council discussions on African conflicts and Council missions to Africa need to be followed by concrete actions, driven by the political will to commit the necessary resources to conflict prevention, management and resolution and to post-conflict peace-building efforts in Africa.

The President: I thank Mr. Gambari, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, for those remarks.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The presidency, on its own responsibility, will summarize important and new suggestions presented during this debate and will circulate them shortly.

This is the last formal meeting of the Pakistan presidency of the Security Council. Pakistan inherited the presidency in good shape from Mexico. We are concluding our presidency with a sense of deep satisfaction. During this month, building on previous efforts, we saw the Council regain its unity of purpose and move forward in a constructive spirit.

I should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to all members of the Security Council, who have extended unfailing cooperation to the Pakistani presidency and have enabled us to discharge our responsibilities this month. I should also like to express my delegation's deepest appreciation to the Security Council secretariat for its invaluable and unstinting support. We are also grateful to the support staff of translators, interpreters and security personnel for their characteristic hard work and good humour during the entire month. I wish to conclude by wishing every success to my successor, Ambassador Lavrov of the Russian Federation, into whose expert and experienced hands the Council presidency will pass next month.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.